

# ***Accomplishments of the San Diego River Conservancy***

**Deborah S. Jayne**

**April 19, 2004 to April 19, 2006**

## **1. Planning**

### **Five Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan**

Adopted Reso 06-03 approving final Plan (Mar 2006). Submitted to Department of Finance. Fiscal Needs: \$164.5 million over five year planning period.

## **2. Requests for FY 07/08 Budget Increases**

### **a. Submitted 7 Capital Outlay Budget Change Proposals totaling \$6.25 million.**

Submitted seven COBCPs to Resources Agency requesting \$6.25 million in capital outlay funds or budget authority. If approved, Resources forwards to Department of Finance for review. If approved, Executive Officer defends them before legislature. Three include requests for unallocated unappropriated Prop 40 specific-purpose funds.

### **b. Submitting 1 Support Budget Change Proposal requesting 1.5 PYs (position authority)**

Preparing and will submit one Support BCP to Resources Agency by June 9 deadline. The BCP will request 1.5 PYs (personnel year or position authority) to assist EO with project management, project development, and the search and management of additional funding sources.

## **3. Projects Nearing Completion (1 Donation)**

### **White Trust Property Donation**

Conservancy accepting title to 104 acre donation / Foundation will manage land in perpetuity. Adopted Reso 05-28 (Dec 2005) authorizing acceptance of title. Submitting review request package to Dept of General Services (DGS) by June 8, 2006. 4-6 weeks for DGS/Public Works Board approval.

## **4. Projects Underway (2 Acquisitions; 3 Other Projects)**

### **a. "Property 001" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy is positioned to acquire "Property 001" which is an important land acquisition, has a useable trail in place, and has historical and cultural significance. Appraisal and Phase 1 are pending. Conservancy plans to partner with County of San Diego.

### **b. Mission Valley Preserve Restoration**

**Resources Agency currently reviewing City's application for Prop 40 River Parkways funds** to restore Mission Valley Preserve; 4 acres; \$500,000. Conservancy adopted motion (Sept 2004) approving use of Prop 40 funds and requesting City to apply. **City applied to Resources Agency in Nov 2004.**

### **c. Ocean Beach Bicycle Pathway Extension**

**Resources Agency currently reviewing City's application for Prop 40 River Parkways funds** to extend San Diego River (OB) Bicycle path; .78 miles; \$2 million. Conservancy adopted motion (Sept 2004) approving use of Prop 40 funds and requesting City to apply. **City applied to Resources Nov 2004.**

### **d. Eagle Peak Preserve Acquisition**

**Resources reviewing Foundation's application for Prop 40 River Parkways funds** to acquire Eagle Peak Parcel; 85 acres; \$175,000. Conservancy adopted motion

(Sept 2004) approving Prop 40 funds/requesting Foundation to apply. **Foundation applied to Resources in January 2006 (or 12/05?)**

**e. Hydrology Assessment of San Diego River Watershed**

Early stages of Assessment design. Adopted Reso 05-02 (April 2005) authorizing acceptance of \$240,000 settlement. Adopted Reso 05-22 (Aug 2005) authorizing \$240,000 for Hydro Assessment. Will assess River hydrology, hydraulics, water quality, sediment transport, and groundwater hydrology and quality. Have applied to numerous sources for funding. Conducted two mtgs with City of San Diego and "Kickoff Meeting" w/ key stakeholders & hydrologists (Dec 2005). Next meeting scheduled for June 12, 2006.

**5. Projects in Early Development (11 Acquisitions; 1 Conservation Easement; 1 Donation; 5 Trail Segments; 4 Other Projects)**

**a. "Property 002" Acquisition (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy assuming lead in negotiations with seller. Assessing willingness. Conservancy adopted motion (Sept 2004) of informal support to advance this acquisition.

**b. "Property 003" Acquisition (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy assessing willingness of seller.

**c. "Property 004" Acquisition (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy assessing willingness of seller. Conservancy adopted motion (Sept 2004) of informal support to advance this acquisition.

**d. "Property 005" Acquisition (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy initiating partnership with State Parks to acquire "Property 005" which is an important land acquisition and has very significant historical and cultural value. Referred to Conservancy by Assembly member who was referred by Assembly Budget Committee.

**e. "Property 006" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy working with Endangered Habitats League to assemble funding package.

**f. "Property 007" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy working with Endangered Habitats League to assess willingness of seller.

**g. "Property 008" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conserv working w/ Endangered Habitats League & Helix Water District to assess willingness of seller.

**h. "Property 009" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy working with Endangered Habitats League to assess willingness of seller.

**i. "Property 010" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy working with Endangered Habitats League to assess willingness of seller.

**j. "Property 011" Acquisition (El Monte Valley)**

Conservancy working with Endangered Habitats League to assess willingness of seller.

**k. "Property 012" Acquisition (HEADWATERS)**

Conservancy partnering with Foundation so it may acquire "Property 012". \$250,000

**l. “Conservation Easement 001” (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy working with City to advance a potential easement. Conservancy adopted motion (Sept 2004) of informal support to advance this acquisition/easement.

**m. Donation Offer Land in Watershed (near Sycamore Creek)**

Conservancy exploring options for land swaps and/or referring donation to Endangered Habitats League.

**n. Construct 2-Mile Trail Segment to Cedar Creek**

Conservancy partnering with Cleveland National Forest (lead) and Helix Water District. San Diego Country Estates to San Diego River Gorge segment, \$100,000, already under construction/funding ran out.

**o. Construct 2-Mile Trail Segment in Lakeside (east end)**

Conservancy partnering with Lakeside’s River Park Conservancy (lead) CEQA complete. \$200,000

**p. Construct Trail Segment in Lakeside (west end)**

Conservancy partnering with Supervisor Dianne Jacob / County of San Diego (lead).

**q. Construct Trail Segment in Santee (Linking Lakeside to City of San Diego)**

Conservancy partnering with City of Santee (lead) City of San Diego and other landowners.

**r. Construct Trail Segment Under 163 from Hazard Center to Fashion Valley**

Conservancy partnering with City of San Diego (lead) and SD Bicycle Coalition. Federal appropriation secured by Bicycle Coalition; only \$125, 000 needed.

**s. Signage for Estuary (park and interpretive signage)**

Conservancy partnering with Foundation (lead) \$175,000.

**t. Signage for Entire River Park Length (park signage)**

Conservancy working with many partners and landowners.

**u. Map & Remove Invasive Vegetation / Replant Natives & Manage**

Conservancy partnering with SD Police Dept, EHL, Foundation. Scope from El Capitan Dam to ocean. Mapping alone is \$165,000.

**v. Restoration of Town Country/Union Trib/Fashion Val/163/Hazard Ctr Area**

Partner with all landowners and Foundation to widen and restore River area.

**6. Past and Future Conservancy Efforts to Secure Funding**

Although the San Diego River Conservancy is still in its infancy, it has already taken significant steps to secure funding (or related budget authority) necessary to conduct its mission.

**a. Federal Appropriation Request for 2007 thru Congresswomen Susan Davis**

The Conservancy has submitted a request for 2007 federal appropriation through the Department of Interior via Congresswoman Susan Davis. If successful, the funding would be appropriated to the Conservancy’s local federal partner, the Bureau of Reclamation, for the purpose of developing sophisticated predictive models upon which the Conservancy’s Hydrology Assessment of the San Diego River Watershed will be based. This federal appropriation request is pending.

**b. Federal Appropriation Request for 2007 thru Dept of Agriculture via City**

The Conservancy has also submitted a request for 2007 federal appropriation through the Department of Agriculture via City of San Diego. If successful, the funding would be appropriated to the Conservancy's local federal partner, the Cleveland National Forest, for the purpose of acquiring private in-holdings within the Forest on behalf of the Conservancy. This federal appropriation request is pending.

**c. \$240,000 Settlement Award in Interest-Bearing Special Deposit Fund Acct**

The Conservancy has **successfully secured a \$240,000 award** through the Regional Water Quality Control Board from the City of San Diego as mitigation for alleged discharges of sewage into the San Diego River. The funds were part of a larger settlement between the City and the Regional Board. The Executive Officer was successful in establishing an interest bearing *Special Deposit Fund Account* (through the Dept of Finance) to receive these funds and similar future funds. These funds are readily accessible and can be used for capital outlay purposes. The Governing Board has formally designated these funds as seed money to initiate the Conservancy's comprehensive Hydrology Assessment of the San Diego River Watershed which is currently in the early design stages. Portions of the \$240,000 however are currently being used to cover the upfront costs of on-going acquisitions (White property, "Property 001", etc.). This practice will necessarily continue until the Conservancy is able to secure an alternate source of readily available funds for this purpose.

**a. Legislature's Infrastructure Bond Proposals for June 2006 Ballot**

Conservancy adopted Reso 05-10 (June 2005) supporting infrastructure bond line-item allocation.  
Conservancy adopted Reso 05-21 (Aug 2005) supporting infrastructure bond allocation > \$10 million.  
EO working w/key legislators/staff/committees to secure line-item allocation for Conserv since Mar 2005.  
SB153 & Senate's final version had **\$10 million allocation for Conserv.** Failed to get 2/3 vote on floor.  
Assembly's final version had **\$20 million allocation for Conservancy.** Failed to get 2/3 vote on floor.

**e. Water and Parks (Cave's) Private Initiative for Nov 2006 Ballot**

Although the Conservancy does not have its own specific line item allocation in the Cave's initiative (EO was not aware of initiative during drafting), it is eligible to receive significant funding from the State Coastal Conservancy under Chapter 7, Protection of Beaches, Bays and Coastal Waters (assuming voter approval). Section 75060(f) makes \$27 million available to the Coastal Conservancy for the protection of San Diego Bay and coastal watersheds.

The San Diego River Conservancy will submit well developed project proposals to the Coastal Conservancy requesting funding. The Conservancy will also request funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board. In addition, the Conservancy will submit competitive applications to the Resources Agency, State Water Resources Board, Department of Water Resources, Department of Parks and Recreation, and other departments for various pots of funding included in the initiative such as River Parkways, Urban Streams, etc. The Conservancy may also explore urban greening funds in the initiative.

**f. Resources' Prop 40 River Parkways Funds for San Diego River -- \$3 million**

***Current status: Three applications, totaling approximately \$3 million, are currently under review by the Resources Agency.***

When the Conservancy brought its Executive Officer on board in late April 2004, there was approximately \$7.8 million (of the original \$12 million) remaining in Resources' Prop 40 River Parkways line-item for the San Diego River. In September of 2004, the Executive Officer recommended and the Conservancy Governing Board unanimously approved three excellent projects and the use of approximately \$3 million in Prop 40 River Parkways funds to support them.

The Board requested the lead partner for each project to submit application directly to the Resources Agency for Prop 40 funding. The City of San Diego submitted two applications (bicycle path development project and habitat restoration project) and the San Diego River Park Foundation submitted one application (acquisition in headwaters). Both have also submitted additional requested information. The Conservancy

has remained in contact with both the applicants and the Resources Agency throughout the review process. The Conservancy has and will continue to facilitate completion of the application review process in any way it can and within the shortest possible timeframe.

**g. Current Plans for Resources' Remaining Prop 40 River Parkways-\$5 mill**

***Current status: Application, totaling approximately \$5 million, is currently under development by the Conservancy and will be submitted to Resources ASAP.***

The San Diego River Conservancy is currently preparing a multi-project, multi-partner application for the entire remaining \$5 million balance of Prop 40 River Parkways funds. The Conservancy's application(s), which will be submitted directly to Resources, requests Prop 40 River Parkways funds for the design and construction of multiple trail segments along the length of the River as well as some very recently available acquisitions which we are currently pursuing and intend to secure as quickly as possible.

We are proposing the development of trail segments (of varying lengths) in the headwaters, El Monte Valley, Lakeside, the City of Santee, and the City of San Diego and we are currently working closely with our partners to develop application for each segment. Partners include the Cleveland National Forest, the County of San Diego, the City of Santee, City of San Diego, the Endangered Habitats League, the San Diego River Park Foundation, the San Diego Bicycle Coalition and other members of the San Diego River Coalition. We are also currently working closely with the Department of Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife to address each of the many complex CEQA issues that have arisen to date.

Our Prop 40 application will also request funding for several newly available acquisitions we are currently pursuing. These include one exceptional two-mile long parcel (currently in bankruptcy court) and several parcels in El Monte Valley. We will also request funding for a conservation easement we are pursuing.

**h. Previous Informal Plans for Remainder of Prop 40 River Parkways Funds**

Since late April 2004, the City of San Diego has on more than one occasion presented status reports to the Governing Board on four to six potential acquisitions it has been pursuing. These were believed to represent the best, highest priority opportunities within the City for Prop 40 funding. In Sept 2004, the Governing Board gave its blessing to develop these potential acquisitions ASAP and voted to informally support any or all of the six parcels for potential future Prop 40 funding. To date, some of these acquisition efforts continue to be viable but are not yet ready for purchase. The Conservancy will continue contact with City real estate representatives and the landowners as appropriate. When and if the landowners become ready to sell, the Conservancy will be there to assist them.

**i. Reimbursement Authority and Federal Trust Fund**

In addition, the Conservancy has applied for several state and local grants and other funding opportunities. In anticipation of receiving such funds, the Conservancy requested and was granted \$500,000 of Reimbursement Authority. The Conservancy plans to request increased Reimbursement Authority by way of the Budget Revision process, as needed. The Conservancy has also applied for three federal appropriations. In anticipation of receiving federal funding, the Conservancy submitted a COBCP to Resources Agency requesting Federal Trust Fund Authority for FY 07/08.

**j. Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) to Local Transit District**

The Conservancy has submitted an SEP application to the San Diego Metropolitan Transit District and the Regional Water Quality Control Board to obtain funding for the Conservancy's Hydrology Assessment of the San Diego River Watershed. Decision is pending.

The Conservancy further intends to aggressively pursue other appropriate federal, state, local, and private funding sources as they arise in the future. In addition, the Conservancy has also applied for several past sources of funding as summarized below.

- **Federal Appropriation for FY 2006**

- **Consolidated Grant (State Water Resources Control Board)**
- **Prop 50 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (SWRCB)**
- **Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (four proposals)**

## **7. Annual Budgets, Expenditures, Reappropriations**

EO develops Conservancy's proposed annual budget and expenditure reports

Conservancy adopted Reso 05-01 (Apr 05) approving FY 05/06 Budget and Expenditure Report

Conservancy adopted Reso 06-01 (Feb 06) approving FY 06/07 Budget and Expenditure Report

Adopted motion requesting reappropriation of FY 03/04 budget (July 2004)

- **Successful in legislative reappropriation of Conservancy's unused FY 03/04 budget**

Adopted motion requesting extension of balance of Prop 40 funds (July 2004)

- **Successful in legislative extension of deadline to encumber original appropriation of Prop 40 River Parkways funds in Resources Budget earmarked for San Diego River**

## **8. Sacto Trips / Building Support in the Capitol**

### **a. May 2004 (4 days total to Sacto and Tahoe Conservancy)**

Purpose: Request Reappropriation of (1) Unused 03/04 Support Budget; and (2) Prop 40 Extension of deadline to encumber / expend. Numerous meetings with legislators, chiefs of staff, consultants to fiscal, appropriations, and policy committees to introduce Conservancy. Meetings w/ Tahoe Conservancy EO.

### **b. March 2006 (5 days)**

Purpose: Introduce Conservancy's Five Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan emphasizing \$164.5 million need; request legislative support for line-item allocation in both houses' version of the Infrastructure Bond. Numerous meetings w/legislators, chiefs of staff, consultants to fiscal, appropriations, & policy committees.

## **9. Press Coverage**

June 2004 Union Tribune (appointment of Executive Officer)

March 2006 EO wrote press release on adoption of Five Year Plan

March 2006 Union Tribune (adoption of Five Year Plan)

March 2006 Daily Transcript (adoption of Five Year Plan)

April 2006 Beach & Bay Press (adoption of Five Year Plan)

May 2006 California Planning and Development Report (adoption of Five Year Plan)

EO wrote Op-Ed on Lakeside's restoration project (not printed)

## **10. EO Public Speaking Engagements**

American Bar Association luncheon (introduce Conservancy)

Lakeside's River Park Conservancy (introduce Conservancy)

Foundation's Annual Celebration (introduce Conservancy)

City of San Diego City Council (position on City's Master Plan)

Mission Valley Unified Planning Committee (replacement of culverts with bridges)

Mission Valley Community Council (introduce Conservancy)

Mission Valley Community Council (Five Year Plan)

City of San Diego's Natural Resources and Cultural Committee (Five Year Plan)

Assembly Budget Committee Pre-Hearing (introduce Conservancy and Five Year Plan)

San Diego River Park Coalition (Five Year Plan)

C3, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3 Breakfast (Five Year Plan)

County of San Diego's Planning Commission (Lakeside restoration)

Regional Water Quality Control Board (replacement of culverts with bridges)

Board of Trustees for State Universities in Long Beach (Adobe Falls)

## ***11. Important Conservancy Resolutions (Partial list)***

### **a. California Performance Review**

Adopted Reso 04-07 (Sept 2004) opposing elimination of Conservancy; Submitted extensive comments to Resources Agency.

### **b. Grantville Redevelopment**

Adopted Reso 05-06 (April 2005) directing EO to prepare comments on adequacy of CEQA; Submitted extensive comments to Redevelopment Agency.

### **c. Adobe Falls Development**

Adopted Reso 05-07 (April 2005) directing EO to prepare comments on adequacy of CEQA; Submitted extensive comments to SDSU; EO testified to Board of Trustees, Cal State Univs (May 05, Long Beach)

### **d. City of San Diego's Master Plan for San Diego River Park**

Directed EO to prepare comments on Master Plan. Submitted extensive comments. Adopted EO and Board's recommended language changes and directed EO to testify before City Council (May 2005).

## ***12. Important SD Meetings (partial list)/Developing Relationships***

Councilmember Jim Madaffer (Grantville Redevelopment)  
Helix Water District  
Cleveland National Forest  
National Parks Service  
Superior Ready Mix Mine  
San Diego River Watershed Management Meetings  
San Diego River Coalition (regular monthly meeting)  
City of San Diego / City of Santee / County of San Diego  
Various partners /stakeholders  
Landowners / potential willing sellers  
SDSU (Adobe Falls / formal partnership with SDSU)  
Regional Workbench Consortium / UCSD Super Computer  
Dept of Fish and Game  
US Fish and Wildlife  
Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project  
CA State Parks (upcoming)  
Caltrans (upcoming)  
Agenda setting meetings with Conservancy Chair (reoccurring meeting)

## ***13. Field Events/Tours for Governing Board &/or EO (partial list)***

Mission Valley Preserve tour (Governing Board)  
Ocean Beach Bicycle Extension tour (Governing Board)  
Cedar Creek Falls Hike (with Helix Water District for Governing Board)  
Old Mission Dam Flume hiked east of Admiral Baker Golf Course  
Fashion Valley/ Town & Country Hotel /163/ Hazard Center vicinity walk  
Eagle Peak / Headwaters (many trips)  
Lakeside (many trips)  
Hiked to 3 potential acquisitions in headwaters, El Monte Heights, Forest in-holdings  
Phase 1 White Property, accompanied consultant  
San Diego River Historic Flume above El Monte Valley  
Mission Valley (many trips)  
Santee (many trips)  
City of San Diego to Santee interface

Chula Vista Interpretive Center with County of SD and State Coastal Conservancy (Board invited)  
Governor's Executive Forum (Sacto)

#### ***14. Contractual Agreement (7 contracts in place)***

**a. State Coastal Conservancy:**

Interagency Agreement for administrative and legal support  
Adopted Reso 05-05 (April 2005)

**b. Land Conservation Brokerage:**

Environmental Services Contract for brokerage and program support  
Adopted Reso 05-25 (Aug 2005)

**c. Planning Consultant**

New Consultant, Gail Odom (commencing June 2006)

**d. State Water Resources Control Board**

Lease Agreement for office space (multi-year commencing 2005)

**e. KTU&A Landscape Architecture**

Development of GIS web-based Parcel Inventory and Maps (ongoing commencing Feb 2006)

**f. URS Corporation**

Conduct of Phase 1 site Assessments (ongoing commencing March 2006)

**g. Pete Robertson**

Conduct of appraisals (contract to be signed June 2006)

#### ***15. Existing River Planning Documents by Partners***

**Master Plan, San Diego River Park (City of San Diego)**

Conservancy submitted extensive comments; Adopted Statement of Board's position on Master Plan  
(June 2005) Executive Officer testified to San Diego City Council on June 21, 2005

**Conceptual Plan, San Diego River Park (Foundation);** Accepted Plan

**Watershed Management Plan, San Diego River (County of San Diego)**

Conservancy submitted extensive comments

**Santee's San Diego River Park Plan (City of Santee)**

Accepted Plan

**Lakeside's River Park Conservancy's Concept Plan**

Accepted Plan



## **16. Website Upgrades**

Redesigned/upgraded Website; Numerous mtgs/discussions w/ CERES on past and future website upgrades

## **17. Public Outreach Events / Tools**

Designed & purchased first Conservancy brochure  
Designed & purchased Conservancy beach balls for hand out  
Designed & purchased Conservancy visors for hand out  
San Diego Riverfest 2004, attended  
San Diego Riverfest 2005, donated money to Foundation, worked Conservancy exhibit  
San Diego Riverfest 2006, donated money to Lakeside's Conserv & SDRP Foundation, worked Conserv exhibit  
Earth Day 2005, worked Conservancy exhibit  
Aquatic Adventures River Mouth Event, worked Conservancy exhibit

## **18. Agency Operations**

Conducted 11 Governing Bd mtgs to date  
Adopted Privacy Policy, Reso 04-04 (May 2004 )  
Adopted Conflict of Interest Policy, Reso 04-05 (May 2004 )  
Adopted Delegation of Authority to Executive Office, Reso 04-06 (July 2004 )

## **19. Challenges**

Insufficient funding (no capital outlay budget) / insufficient staffing  
.5 mile jurisdiction on either side of thread of river, too limited to conduct mission  
Inequitable representation on Governing Board (no County or City of Santee, Forest or Helix WD rep)  
Lack of property for sale within jurisdiction  
Need for greater Board Member participation in legislative meetings and efforts to secure funds

## **20. EO Medical Leave**

Late August to mid November 2005 (approx three months)